

cept every Scriptural teaching concerning Christ and the way of salvation, and yet not be a Christian.

Another mistake that always has been, and still is common, is, that one becomes a Christian by uniting with the church and being a more or less zealous and active member. There is no doubt that public confession is a Christian duty. Our Lord made it very clear that his friends must come out from the world and follow him openly among men. The light that is hid will not burn brightly—the hiding smothers it. It was a startling saying of Jesus that if we do not confess him before men, he will not confess us before his Father and the angels.

It is important, too, that we take our place in the church and be not only loyal to it, but earnest in its services and active in its work. To fail in one's duty to the church is to fail in fullness of Christian life. All friends of Christ need to show their devotion to their Master by devotion to the cause. There is altogether too much thinking lightly of Christian profession. Even among those who claim to be friends and followers of Christ there is too great a tendency to make little of church profession.

But, on the other hand, there are those who have no conception of Christian life beyond attachment to the church and devotion to it. They put great stress upon its services. They are scrupulously careful in observing all its rites. They lay great stress on all religious duties and ceremonies. They never omit any public act of worship. They are always present at the meetings and their place is never empty at the communion.

Yet somehow their religion seems never to show itself in their life. It does not work out in love and peace and joy and longsuffering and gentleness and meekness and goodness. One cannot help recalling the fact that in our Lord's time there were certain people who were intense in their devotion to the church, who were scrupulously careful in all religious acts and observances, but who came under the Master's severe condemnation. Their lives were most unbeautiful in his sight. He spoke of them and to them in scathing words. They were not only the most orthodox people in all the land, but were also the most punctilious in their observance of the ordinances of religion, the most careful Sabbath keepers, the people who made the greatest show of their almsgiving and their praying.

Yet their religion seems to have had no good influence upon their lives. Evidently they were anything but sweet and lovely in disposition and character. They were censorious, they were intolerant, they were cold and hard in their treatment of the poor. They were proud, impatient, quick to see sins and faults in others, but blind to the imperfections and shortcomings and neglects and all the unlovely things in themselves.

We should always remember that to be a Christian is, first of all, to have Christ in the heart and then Christ in the life. We should

seek to know the truth, pondering daily and deeply the words of Christ. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Our beliefs, if rightly held, will have a transforming effect upon our conduct and character. Our church attachment, if it be real and spiritual, will bring us also into close union with Christ, and every act of worship we perform will leave in us a new measure of strength, inspire in us some new desire, give us a new impulse toward nobleness, and encourage us for braver and better service.

So it comes that the final proof of Christian life is neither in its orthodoxy of belief nor in its church relation, but in what it does in a man. Someone asked Tennyson once, "What is Jesus Christ to you?" They were walking in a garden, his friend and he, and pointing to a rosebush filled with marvelous beauty, Tennyson replied, "What the sun is to that rosebush, Jesus Christ is to me." We are Christians only when the love of Christ falls upon us like sunshine, sinks to the depths of our being, transforms and woos out in us whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure.

Love is the whole of the true Christian life. Whatever is not of love is not of Christ. Love is always gentle. It is patient, thoughtful, kind. It is forgiving, forbearing. It seeketh not its own. It doth not behave itself unseemly. It is not easily provoked. It is always ready to serve. There are many people, however, who seem never to have learned anything better in life than to expect others to live for them, to do things for them, to serve them. But that is not the Christian way. Jesus himself said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." When we get into this attitude toward others, all others, and begin to live to serve, to help, then are we Christians.

#### Grace of Courtesy

New York Observer.

The duty here enjoined is something more than a social accomplishment, it is a Christian grace. If it were only a certain politeness or agreeableness of behavior, it might be acquired and exhibited by those who have nothing of the spirit of religion, pure and undefiled. But it is something more than and different from a mere superficial refinement of manners or correctness of conduct. If this were all or chief, it is not likely that Peter, as a plain fisherman, would have felt himself called upon to give any instruction to the members of his flock or, if required, would have felt himself able to give any valuable direction in the premises. While it may be he would not disparage the value of even so superficial a thing, it is not likely that, in view of it, he would have given the injunction, "Be courteous."

The courtesy he enjoined was, first of all, a thing of the heart and the life, leaving the particular form of its expression to the good sense of the individual and the demands of

the times and circumstances in which the specific duty was to be performed. This courtesy requires, in the first place, a certain lowliness of mind and benevolence of heart, which minds not high things but condescends to men of low estate; a readiness and willingness to do good unto all men as opportunity requires or permits, especially to them which are of the household of faith. It does not make invidious distinctions between the rich and the poor, saying to the man in rich clothing, and with a gold ring: "Come thou here and sit in a good place," but to the man in plain raiment, "Stand thou there or sit here under my footstool," thus becoming partial and a judge of evil thoughts.

Such is not this courtesy. It is something higher in its character and broader in its comprehension. It honors all men because of the rights and essential dignity of human nature. It loves broadly and impartially even as Christ loves, and, for His sake, who died for all men, it respects every human being made in the divine image and redeemed by the precious blood of the atonement. Its respect arises from a genuine reverence for human nature, both because of what it is and what it may become under the tuition of divine wisdom and the influence of the Spirit of all grace. It is therefore deferential even to the lowly, it is filled with brotherly kindness and charity, ready to serve with all meekness and humility of mind, to bear burdens, to sympathize, to weep with the sorrowful and rejoice with the glad. It is a genuine fellow feeling, and cannot fail in a due manifestation of that bearing and conduct which is the life and soul of all true politeness and genuine good breeding.

Without this inner deference and heartfelt benevolence there can be no true courteousness. There may, indeed, be a gracefulness of manner, a certain polish, smooth and attractive as the finish of Parian marble, but it will be as hard and cold as that dead material. We might admire it as we would a French mirror in a gold-gilt frame, but it would still be only because of its power to reflect the images placed before it, and not because it had any power to warm and animate them. Christian courtesy is not a mere reflection of the manners and maxims of courts and banquet halls and splendid parlors.

While it embodies all of the substance there may be in any of them, it knows how to behave itself not unseemly and without vanity alike on state occasions and in the dwellings of the poor; in the casual meetings of the wayside and the marts of business. It is not a thing of set times and occasions, but like charity whose expression it is, it never faileth whether in the privacy of the home, the gathering of friends, the vexations of business or the clash of contradictory opinions. It suffers long and is kind, it is not easily provoked, and thinketh no evil. It is, in short, not a grace of the schools, but a fruit of the Spirit, and is only one of a rich